

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 A-01 EB-07 COME-00 RSC-01 /019 W

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R 130950Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3489

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AFSP, JO

SUBJ: TRANSFER OF COMMERCIAL FUNCTION FROM CHANCERY

REF: FOREIGN SERVICE INSPECTORS REPORT

1. DURING THEIR STAY IN AMMAN IN JULY 1974, THE FOREIGN SERVICE INSPECTORS SUGGESTED WE REVIEW THE PROPOSAL FOR MOVING THE COMMERCIAL SECTION TO AN OFFICE OUTSIDE THE CHANCERY. BEFORE RECEIVING THE INSPECTOR'S FORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS, WE CLOSELY EXAMINED ALL THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSED MOVE.

2. THE MAIN ADVANTAGE OF THE RELOCATION WOULD BE AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF LOCAL BUSINESS VISITORS AND EXPANDED CONTACTS WITH THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY. THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT THE LOSS OF DIGNITY INVOLVED IN SECURITY SEARCHES AND QUESTIONING DISCOURAGES BUSINESSMEN FROM COMING TO THE PRESENT COMMERCIAL OFFICE. THE SERIOUS INSECURITY OF 1970-71 WAS THE REASON FOR MOVING THE COMMERCIAL SECTION TO THE CHANCERY. BEFORE THIS PERIOD, THE EMBASSY HAD MAINTAINED A COMMERCIAL OFFICE IN DOWNTOWN AMMAN FOR 11 YEARS. WITH THE PRESENT GREATLY IMPROVED ATMOSPHERE, THE RIGID SECURITY PROCEDURES PRACTICED AT THE CHANCERY WOULD NOT BE NECESSARY AT A SEPARATE COMMERCIAL OFFICE.

3. THE U.K., FRANCE, THE SOVIET UNION AND OTHERS MAINTAIN COMMERCIAL SECTIONS OUTSIDE THEIR CHANCERIES. A WELL-LOCATED COMMERCIAL OFFICE WILL ENCOURAGE LOCAL BUSINESSMEN TO CALL PERSONALLY AND TAKE FULLER ADVANTAGE OF COMMERCIAL SERVICES.

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4. SPACE IS STILL AVAILABLE IN AN OFFICE BUILDING NOW BEING COMPLETED IN DOWNTOWN AMMAN. THIS IS ALSO MUCH CLOSER TO OUR POTENTIAL CLIENTELE. THE FIRST NATIONAL CITY BANK IS IN THIS BUILDING AND, UNLIKE OUR PRESENT OFFICES, THE SPACE WE ARE CONSIDERING IS LARGE ENOUGH FOR SMALL EXHIBITS AND CATALOG SHOWS. THE BUILDING HAS CENTRAL HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING AND THE RENT IS REASONABLE. THE EMBASSY WOULD ALSO RETAIN A SMALL COMMERCIAL OFFICE IN THE CHANCERY FOR PARTIME USE BY THE COMMERCIAL OFFICER.

5. THE DISADVANTAGES OF THE MOVE ARE ADDITIONAL EXPENSES, \$10,000 THE FIRST YEAR AND \$7,500 ANNUALLY THEREAFTER, AND LESS SECURITY FOR THE COMMERCIAL STAFF.

6. HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE THAT THE INCREASED CONTACT WITH THE COMMERCIAL SECTOR WOULD ADEQUATELY JUSTIFY THE EXPENSE. INCREASED U.S. COMMERCIAL INTEREST IN MIDEAST AND FAST PACE OF COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENTS ARE EVIDENCED BY CURRENT INTEREST IN TRIANGULAR INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES, TRADE AND INVESTMENT SECTOR OF U.S.-JOINT COMMISSION AND BY FORTHCOMING POIC VISIT TO JORDAN. ESTABLISHMENT OF A MECHANISM FOR INTIMATE COMMERCIAL CONTACTS AND FOR MORE EFFECTIVE COMMERCIAL INTELLIGENCE WILL BE BEST ACCOMPLISHED BY RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMERCIAL OFFICE DOWNTOWN.

7. EMBASSY HOPES THAT FOREGOING SUMMARY WILL SATISFY INSPECTION COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT MENTIONED IN INSPECTION RECOMMENDATION NR 90. FOR REASONS MENTIONED IN AMMAN 0214, EMBASSY HAS URGENT REQUIREMENT FOR RELOCATION OF COMMERCIAL OFFICE AND WOULD LIKE DEPARTMENT APPROVAL FOR FUNDING ASAP.  
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